

Masthead Logo

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# Providence, Rhode Island

Al Young

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we slip thru pirates alley  
past the old cathedral  
to see kid thomas mute his horn  
with a brown paper bag.

## Providence, Rhode Island / Al Young

It's spring again  
the early part when  
the wettest wind  
gives you a licking  
you'll never forget

You stand quivering  
down by the Biltmore  
whistling for taxis  
as maxi-skirted women  
flee the scene  
you've just stepped into

The grayness of this  
white water city feels  
good to blood that wants  
to explode on century's notice  
shattering calendar meat  
& appointments well kept

Colonial afternoons  
had to be colder than  
the hearts of witches  
laid to rest beneath  
these charming citypaved hills

Rushing for cover  
you now understand the  
cooled out literalness  
of these old wooden homes

A skinny black man  
(a brother you guess)

who commutes between  
this stop & Harlem U.S.A.  
tells you he's never been to  
Brown or the School of Design  
but he know for a fact that  
it's mafia keep this town relaxed

"They got the highest houses  
up in them hills but after them  
come all your professors & pro-  
fessionals/people with a  
highclass license to steal"

You want to come back in  
summer when the change takes  
place but this brilliant chill  
has tightened your head

New England is a poker game too

## Mr. Booker T. / James W. Blake

Were you the Brer Rabbit  
of African conjuring?  
Did you take Stowe's  
vision and turn it  
into her husband's foe?  
Did that scheme  
divide our family  
or was Du Bois just  
the turn man  
and Garvey a substitute?  
Is it true you taught  
Chilembwe how to build  
an icon for freedom  
out of mud?  
Some said it was  
because of the white blood.  
Did you really wink  
approval with Mendel's laws